



**ARIZONA READY EDUCATION COUNCIL
GRADUATION/DROPOUT PREVENTION TASKFORCE**

February 19, 2013 @ 3:00 p.m.

**Executive Tower
1700 W. Washington
3rd Floor Conference Room
Phoenix, AZ 85007**

Meeting Notes

Members Present: Chair Merl Waschler, Rhian Allvin (telephonic), Cathleen Barton (telephonic), Robert Gray attending for Dan Brown, Pearl Esau, Diane McCarthy, Caroline VanIngen-Dunn attending for Co-chair Darcy Renfro, Dr. Amy Schlessman (telephonic), Dr. Kent Scribner, Tom Tyree, Carolyn Warner, Vince Yanez, and Dr. Jim Zaharis

Members Not Present: Patti Beltram, Rusty Bowers, Mark Dobbins, Marv Lamer, and Amanda McAdams

Staff Present: Rebecca Gau, and Kerry McConnell

Call to Order, Welcome, & Introductions

Merl Waschler called the meeting to order at 3:13 p.m. provided welcoming remarks and introduced the purpose of this meeting, which was to discuss one of the taskforce's recommendations in-depth.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Diane McCarthy moved for the approval of the January 15, 2013 Task force meeting minutes as presented. Carolyn Warner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Update: Graduation Rate Research Plan

Chair Waschler introduced Kerry McConnell with the Governor's Office of Education Innovation to review the Graduation Rate Research Plan. Ms. McConnell reviewed the status of school selection for the research plan. Ms. McConnell also reviewed a data tool to help explore the schools and peers being considered for the project. Dr. Amy Schlessman asked if the peer schools were the comparison schools. Ms. McConnell advised that the peer schools were the comparison and that they were schools that are geographically close to the comparison school with students groups that are similar. Tom Tyree advised that he noticed that in the Yuma schools listed, the study school gets students from mainly one K-8 district and the other peer schools get students from a mixture of other districts. Ms. McConnell asked the members to keep that in mind as she looks further into the data. Mr. Tyree then noted that all the Yuma high

schools are part of the same district and the difference could be related to the feeder schools/districts. Ms. McConnell advised the members that having local knowledge of these schools and districts would be key to the success of the project. She requested assistance in deciding who would be the best candidate for the visits that have this local knowledge. Chair Waschler asked the members if an extra step was needed to help narrow down candidate schools. Dr. Jim Zaharis suggested that Ms. McConnell synthesize the data and send that data to schools to get rival hypothesis. Carolyn Warner recommended that the data be sent to County Superintendents to get information on what the research may mean at a local level. At this time Chair Waschler advised that there may need to be an additional information request to help in the project. Ms. McConnell advised that an intermediate stage is a good idea, and that this could be done a number of ways. Ms. McConnell then asked the members what next steps they would like her to take. Chair Waschler advised that the members would leave it to Ms. McConnell to move forward as she sees appropriate. Ms. McConnell said that she will therefore reach out to Task Force members directly for the needed local information. Dr. Zaharis asked how the members saw this final research being used. Rebecca Gau with the Governor's Office of Education Innovation advised that the research would help shape the Governor's next legislative policy agenda.

Discussion: Support ECAPS

Chair Waschler introduced Ms. Gau to review the second Task Force whitepaper on supporting ECAPS. Ms. Gau introduced Minerva Pargas with the City of Phoenix, Maxine Daly with the Arizona Department of Education, and Kay Schreiber also with ADE who joined the Task Force to help with their work on ECAPS. Ms. Gau then reviewed the white paper and asked the Task Force members if the body could help refine the white paper. Dr. Zaharis commented that he supported what the Task Force was advocating with ECAP, and added that it was important that the State Board of Education, the AZ Ready Education Council, and ADE are on the same page with messaging. Dr. Zaharis also advised that he felt it is important that ECAPS has a sign off procedure for parents, or even possibly be used as a graduation requirement or a requirement for post secondary plans. Dr. Schlessman advised the Task Force that the Charter Schools Board has worked ECAP use into their academic performance framework, along with the Alternative Education Consortium. Ms. Daly commented that she agrees that ECAPS it needs to be institutionalized like credits for math and literature. Ms. Daly also advised that ECAP is the process that exists and AZCIS is the framework tool for that process. Chair Waschler asked for more information on AZCIS. Ms. Schreiber advised that AZCIS starts in 5th grade and moves to high school, college and then career. All middle and high schools are offered the use of AZCIS for free and the partners and colleges are charged a licensing fee. All one stop centers use this system; many of the libraries and most of the career advisement centers in colleges use AZCIS. ADE is responsible for the yearly license \$90,000 with the partners bringing down the cost to approximately \$26,000. Ms. Schreiber advised that there are other vendors that use different systems and some districts are looking into building their own system to assist in the ECAP process. Ms. Daly further advised that ADE currently has no real stake in the AZCIS system and if looking into a vendor change is the answer, ADE is willing to work with that. Ms. Daly did comment that the main idea is to have a long term contract so that schools have the confidence that one system will be around for a graduation cohort.

Ms. Pargas then presented the Degree Phoenix program, a Lumina foundation collaborative program focused on Latino higher education. Diane McCarthy asked what the four targeted high schools were for the Degree Phoenix program. Ms. Pargas advised they were Central, Camelback, Fair Fax, and Carl Hayden. Ms. Gau asked that Ms. Pargas share information on

what is happening with the counselors in regards to helping in ECAPS. Ms. Pargas commented that there is relevance in standardizing the ECAP process; it is a time consuming curriculum but once it is in place it is easy to roll out on a larger scale. Cathleen Barton advised that the business community has been trying to think of ways they can engage specifically in support of common core and academic achievement. Ms. Barton feels that ECAP is a great opportunity for this especially if there is a way to pilot a training process within the business community to assist in the ECAP process.

Ms. Gau then walked through the rest of the recommendation and asked that with the new information given in this meeting what can be added or changed to these recommendations? Chair Waschler commented that the first recommendation seems to be built around AZ CIS, and advised that recommendation should be more general to allow for vendor changes if needed. Ms. Barton suggested asked how all four modules are being used and if the Task Force can look into the funding to see if all four are needed and can this be brought to the business community for funding. Pearl Esau requested that a recommendation be added for additional counselors. Vince Yanez commented that the State Board of Education would not want to add ECAPS into statute and to leave it as a Board requirement, to which Ms. McCarthy and Ms. Warner agreed. Chair Waschler asked if there were any statistics currently available around the success of ECAPS. Ms. Daly advised that this is the first year of implementation so there is not enough information right now. Chair Waschler asked Ms McConnell if she can add the ECAP piece to her research. Ms. McConnell answered that she can and that to the research project and that the information is also reflected in the AZ Ready Report Card. Dr. Zaharis commented that currently there is nothing more important that the Task Force can do but support ECAPS. Dr. Zaharis advised that the Task Force needs integrated messaging on all fronts; AZ Ready, First Things First, ADE, post secondary, etc. Dr. Zaharis said that there is not funding for additional counselors, but that the Task Force might build a model to train para-professionals at schools that are supported with AZCIS and tie this training into workforce money. Dr. Zaharis added father that the state does need a baseline ECAP system for schools to use such as AZCIS. Mr. Tyree suggested that it might help to change the classification of ECAP funding with the auditor general so that is does not reflect as administration funding, which may allow for more community support for ECAP funding in schools.

Council Comments

Ms. Gau requested that if there were any comments or changes for the first whitepaper on CTE relevance to email those to her. Ms Gau also advised that both the CTE and ECAP whitepapers will be reviewed in the next meeting.

Call to the Public

There were no requests from the public to address the Task Force.

Adjourn

With no further business before the Taskforce, Chair Merl Waschler adjourned the meeting at 5:07pm.